



I know it can be hard to know where to start and how to prioritize so this guide will lay out some of what I believe are the small daily actions that come together to create lasting change. The material is broken up into different sections, while these sections are neatly divided for simplicity sake, they are far from separate pieces, the actions you take in one area will boost your results in the others.

If beginning all of these new things at once has you a little uncertain, no worries, it is better to start small than not to start at all. Once you've got one piece incorporated into your day, then it will be easier to keep adding as you see the benefits manifested in your life.

This guide is meant to give you information, tips, and skills for improving your health but no one knows your body and your life better than you. So take what works and leave the rest!

# BODY

Our bodies are incredible systems designed for resilience. It is easy to get caught up in what we think our body should look like and compare ourselves to social and cultural standards. It's easy to lose sight of the fact that our bodies perform so many incredible actions every day to keep us alive. Nurturing our body is about a healthy mindset as well as a healthy physical body. By balancing our hormones, moving our muscles, supporting detoxification functions, and nourishing our body, we help support our body to be the strongest it can be inside and out. Focusing on total body wellness also supports us in achieving our mental health goals. Using these simple tools can support your overall wellbeing!

## ***Sleep***

Sleep is the foundation. Our bodies will not feel their best, our brain will not be able to function at maximum capacity and we lack energy and vibrancy without consistent restful sleep.

How to Support Healthy Sleep:

- Turn off electronics 1 hour before bedtime
- Use blue light blocking glasses after dark
- Try to keep a consistent bedtime (go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time every morning)
- Try to get 8 hours; this may be a goal to work towards – additionally, studies show that it's not possible to “catch up on sleep” what really supercharges your brain and body is consistent sleep!
- Turn your phone off, on airplane mode, or charge in a different room to reduce EMF radiation and being disturbed by notifications.

## ***Movement***

Movement is essential for strength, immune function, hormone and peptide regulation, and supports bodily functions and detoxification. Movement comes in a variety of forms. Aerobic exercise is great for cardiovascular health and mood regulation. Yoga, tai chi, Pilates etc. are great for cultivating the mind/body connection, regulating breath and heart rate, and encourage lymphatic detox. I encourage you to play around, try new things, and notice what works best for you!

Movement Options to Get Started

- Walking, jogging, or running – walking is lower impact and more gentle on the joints, also fast-paced walking has been shown to have the same benefits as jogging or running. Benefits include an increased sense of wellbeing, emotional regulation, and increased brain health.

- Yoga – a low impact workout that helps to regulate the nervous system and also supports many different bodily functions
- There's an App for that! There are also many other free exercise sources such as YouTube, 7 min HIIT workout videos, and fitness apps such as Nike Training App

Aerobic exercise for at least ten minutes increases brain derived neurotropic factor (BDNF). BDNF has been shown to improve memory, trigger production of more serotonin, and is one of the main components of neuroplasticity, the brains ability, to change and grow throughout our lifespan.

*Make stretching a part of your movement routine*

Stretching is healing and supportive to the body and will keep your muscles, bones, and joints healthy for years to come. Stretching warm muscles after a workout will protect against injuries and reduce soreness.

### ***Sunlight***

Being in the sun is crucial to hormone regulation, our circadian rhythms, and our Vitamin D levels. Healthy sun exposure is often a missing component of our wellness routines.

Just spending 15-20 mins in the sun each day without sunscreen or sunglasses helps to regulate thyroid function and the production of Vitamin D, which is essential to several bodily functions including, the regulation of mood and the protection of our skin from skin cancer.

Our circadian rhythm (our sleep/wake cycle) is dictated by the amount of sunlight that comes through our retina every day to determine when to release cortisol to wake up and when to release melatonin to go to sleep. By getting sun, first thing in the morning we can help regulate our circadian rhythm which leads to better sleep and increased mood stability.

Make a practice of standing outside barefoot connected to the ground (grass, dirt, etc.) allowing the sun to come into your eyes for 15-30 minutes as the sun rises every morning and sets every night. This helps our body to exchange negative and positive ions with the earth, reducing pain, increasing dopamine, improving sleep, and balancing hormones.

*This is my #1 go to help support your mental health journey!*

## ***Water***

Our bodies are mainly comprised of water, and so making sure we get enough water each day ensures that our systems are running smoothly!

15-30 minutes before breakfast drink 16 oz of room temperature water with lemon or a teaspoon of ACV; this helps flush the system, promotes detoxification, and aids in digestion.

64 oz of water per day is the old adage, eight 8 ounces glasses per day - this is a great starting point, but aiming a little higher can also increase your health benefits. However, the best way to determine how much water you need is to drink half of your body weight in ounces, so if you weight 140 lbs. you should be drinking 70 ounces of water per day. Add a little more if you are increasing your activity level.

## ***Detoxification***

Detoxification is an important component of overall wellness. Our detox pathways play an important role in methylation of our DNA which allows our genes to express themselves optimally as well as maintain healthy cells and build new hormones, cells, and peptides. There are a variety of ways to assist your body in detoxing from chemicals in the food and our environment.

The most important step is reducing exposure. Many personal care and home products contain harmful chemicals that are shown to be neurotoxic and hormone disrupters. There are two very helpful apps to begin identifying the products in your home that are the most toxic and providing suggestions on non-toxic replacements.

The first app is called Healthy Living and is produced by the Environmental Working Group (EWG), the majority of the products on this app are for home cleaning. The second app is called Think Dirty and allows you to scan personal care products and get a score from 0-10, 0 being completely non-toxic and 10 being the worst offenders, often containing ingredients that are banned in other countries due to their negative health effects.

A large portion of the toxins we come into contact with are from our food system. Pesticides, chemicals, and heavy metals are found on non-organic produce. The EWG releases a list every year called The Dirty Dozen and The Clean Fifteen, you can find these lists for free online. These lists show the 12 most toxic fruits and vegetables, these items it is best to only buy organic. The clean fifteen list shows the top fifteen cleanest non-organic produce. Buying all organic can be expensive, using these lists can be helpful in reducing grocery costs while still keeping you and your family safe.

The last way to reduce heavy metal and toxin exposure is through eating sustainable fished wild caught and organic meats whenever possible. Farmed fish is treated similarly to factory farmed meats and contains hormones, antibiotics, and is typically fed a low quality diet often including

GMO corn. Factory farmed chickens are often fed arsenic to reduce disease. Unfortunately, due to the state of pollution and the rampant use of chemicals wild-caught fish aren't always safe either. Particularly large fish like Salmon and Tuna may have high levels of mercury and heavy metals, however they still contain a lot of very healthful nutrients such as Omega-3. You can mitigate some of your exposure by taking the supplement Chlorella, right before eating these types of fish. Chlorella binds to toxins and allows them to pass through your system without being absorbed.

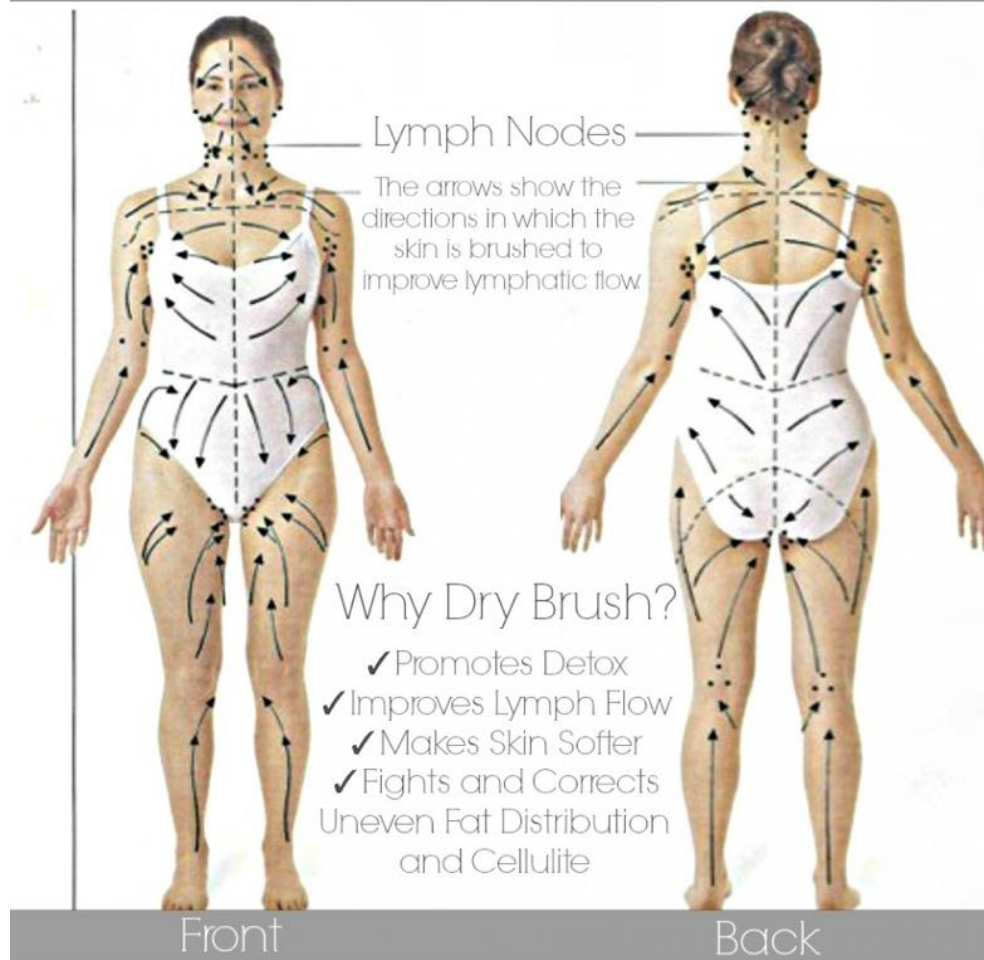
After reducing your exposure, there are a variety of ways to keep your detox pathways working optimally. Sauna, exercise, skin brushing, and drinking lemon water are a few ways to support these vital systems.

### ***Skin brushing***

Dry brushing is a way to stimulate the lymphatic system to promote detoxification and healthy immune function. The benefits of dry brushing are:

- Increases blood flow
- Stimulate nervous system
- Strengthen somatic mind/body connection
- Exfoliates skin
- Enhances digestion

# Guide to Dry Brushing



*Diagram adapted from The Baiden Mitten*

To begin dry brushing it is important to get a boars head bristle brush, you can find them inexpensively on Amazon, and begin brushing skin when it is dry in the direction of your heart and lymphatic centers. The above diagram shows the pattern for brushing to help promote lymphatic drainage. A healthy lymphatic system promotes energy, reduces fatigue, and helps strengthen the immune system. Dry brushing can also be helpful for connecting with the body somatically as you take time to brush each section of the body.

# MIND AND SPIRIT

Another crucial component to living optimally is connecting with the authentic you. It's easy to get busy *doing* so many things we forget about the *being*. Slowing down, taking time for self-reflection, and getting centered puts us in a place of power and connection in our lives that we can feel our most balanced and connected.

There are as many different spiritual practices as there are people. If there is a practice you currently have that you feel serves you and helps you be the best version of yourself, I invite you to renew your dedication to it. Below are two additional practices one for the morning and one for the evening that you can add to what is already working. If you don't have a consistent spiritual or self-reflective practice, I invite you to utilize these two tools to get started on your journey of self-discovery.

## ***5 Minute Morning Meditation***

The thing I love about this practice is that if you commit to it, in just 5 minutes a day, you will begin to see noticeable shifts in how you view and experience your life.

First thing in the morning before you get out of bed, get your coffee, flip on the news or check your phone – prop yourself up in bed, set a timer for 5 minutes and begin to breathe.

As you begin, bring your attention to your breath. Notice the rising and falling of your chest, belly, or the sensation of air coming in and out of your nose.

As you notice the breath, begin to count, one on the inhale, one on the exhale, two on the inhale, two on the exhale, continue this count until you reach five, if a thought distracts you before you get to five start back at one. If you reach five, start again at one. Continue this cycle over and over until the timer goes off.

## ***Evening Review***

I talk to a lot of clients who share that they feel so tired but when they lay down to go to sleep at night they just can't seem to get their thoughts to stop. There are two practices that I find extremely helpful in quieting those incessant thoughts. The first is what I call a brain dump. Often times, the thoughts that are running through our minds is a version of the never ending to-do list or our schedule for the following day. Getting these things out of our head and on to

paper ensures that we won't forget and we can rest knowing that we can prioritize them in the morning.

Another way to help improve sleep and increase mental clarity is to do an evening review of your day. Getting the day onto paper and out of your head reduces ruminating thoughts and gives you direction for the day ahead.

You can answer these eight questions in a journal or the notes section of your phone (although there is a kind of magic when you put pen to paper)

1. Was I angry, frustrated, or upset? Why?
2. Did I try to make things go my way?
3. Was I honest with myself and others?
4. Where was I afraid?
5. Do I need to make things right with someone or share my feelings?
6. Was I kind and helpful? In what ways?
7. What did I do right today?
8. What can I do better tomorrow?

By consistently answering these questions and participating in daily self-reflection, we begin to see what is working for us in our lives and what we can modify to help achieve our goals and maximize our happiness.

### *The Brain Dump*

Is a journaling exercise where you write stream of consciousness everything that comes to your mind until you can't come up with anything else.

No grammar

No punctuation

No filter

No format

Just write everything that comes to mind. Once you're finished writing before you lay down it is also helpful to end the brain dump with a simple gratitude practice.

### *Gratitude*

Write ten things that you are grateful for. By recognizing the things in our lives that we are grateful for, it shifts our mood to what is going well and into relaxation mode. A consistent gratitude practice is also helpful in improving mood throughout the day because we are primed to look for what's working rather than what's not.



I hope that you find these practices helpful in improving your mood, health, and wellbeing. Everything contained in this guide is meant to be suggestions only, please utilize what works for you and leave the rest. Many of the practices and recommendations are modifiable to meet you where you are at.



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